

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE
COUNCIL OF TRUSTEES
OF THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF KANSAS, INC.**

March 20, 2024

The Council of Trustees of the Episcopal Diocese of Kansas, Inc., met at Upton Hall in Topeka on March 20, 2024. Prior to the start of the meeting, the Rt. Rev. Cathleen Chittenden Bascom, Bishop and Chair, reminded the council of the Sam Wells Tocher event this May. Chad Senuta shared information from a visit to St. Martin-in-the-fields in London where Sam Wells is vicar. The bishop shared a prayer from the Book of Common Prayer after which she called the meeting to order at 10:15 a.m.

Members of the Council of Trustees present were:

Bishop Cathleen Chittenden Bascom
Dr. Elizabeth Fitz Gibbon, President
The Rev. Helen Hoch, Clerk
The Ven. Jim Cummins
Ms. Melanie Laster
The Very Rev. Laurie Lewis
The Rev. Margaret McGhee
Mr. Mike Morrow
Mr. Ron Olson
The Rev. Doreen Rice Daab
The Very Rev. Casey Rohleder
Ms. Teresa Ryther
Mr. John Smittle
The Rev. Daryl Stanford

Also present as advisors to the Council of Trustees:

Mr. Hurst Coffman, Vice-Chancellor
Mr. Brian Geary, Treasurer

Also present:

Ms. Michael Funston, Executive Assistant to the Bishop
The Rev. Canon Patrick Funston, Canon to the Ordinary
The Rev. Caroline Howard, Curate for Creation Care
The Rev. Karen Schlabach, Youth, Campus & Digital Missioner
Mr. Chad Senuta, Director of Communications & Young Adult Ministries

Bishop Bascom presented the February 21, 2024, meeting minutes. Mr. Mike Morrow moved that the minutes be accepted as corrected. The motion was seconded, and the minutes were approved unanimously.

Treasurer's Report

Mr. Jay Currie, Comptroller and Assistant Treasurer, presented the diocesan financial statements. He announced that two parishes had already paid their apportionment in full. Income is ahead in year-to-date income. Expenses are over budget for this time of year. The beginning of the year is always a time of heavy expenditures such as the diocesan computer contract, insurance and property liability as well as the HSA accounts. Due to the early apportionment payoffs, the minister priests have been paid for the year. A few expenses had to be paid in 2024 that were meant for 2023 because some major payments including the assessment to the denominational church as well as a health insurance payment were lost in the mail. This is a heavy domestic travel year for the bishop with General Convention, the new Presiding Bishop consecration and continuing education.

Finance Committee Report

Mr. Brian Geary, Treasurer, reiterated thanks for parishes paying their apportionments early. Mr. Geary gave an update on the financial situation with St. Margaret's. The Finance Committee has asked St. Margaret's to turn in as much as possible by the first of May so that the loan repayment negotiation can be set along with the budget plan. Budget planning will begin in May. St. Margaret's has already made one sizeable payment this year.

Verlyn Bollinger, St. John's-Parsons, informed the Finance Committee as to how he has done audits in the Southeast Convocation and what has worked for him over the years. The committee is looking for people within the Church who would be willing to train and help with the audit process. Names can be submitted to Mr. Geary or any member of the Finance Committee. Dean Rohleder asked for specifics as to what the committee is looking for from these volunteers and Mr. Geary said that those specifics and training can be discussed with those whose names are submitted.

Mr. Geary and Mr. Currie visited with St. Aidan's, Olathe, and their vestry to go over their processes and offer advice.

Real Estate Updates

Bishop Bascom moved on to the real estate updates around the diocese. St. Thomas, Holton, has had an offer on their building which has not been used for some time. The parish currently meets in a local café. The bishop asked for questions and concerns. Mr. Coffman, vice-chancellor, was concerned that the contract states all the property in and around the building. St. Thomas has started a list of items they would like to retain. The buyer is a couple who is planning to use the building as an event center.

The bishop pointed out that there are few things on the keep list that would break this contract. Mr. Geary suggested that the council approve the purchase price subject to the property keep list.

Mr. Morrow moved that the Council approve the contract for St. Thomas Episcopal Church, Holton, as presented subject to agreement on personal items listed. The motion was seconded and the vote to approve the St. Thomas property sale passed.

Dean Rohleder asked what would happen with the money from this sale. St. Thomas, Holton, has a fund with the diocese. The parish does have a savings account that is used for the mission of the parish. The money would remain with the parish.

Bishop Bascom moved on to update the council on the Commission of Church Architecture and Allied Arts which had their first meeting of the year. They will meet quarterly as a commission and in between will visit properties like St. Thomas, Holton, and others.

Trinity, Arkansas City, has an education building that they are not using and are putting up for sale. Dean Lewis gave a history on the building from when she was rector of the parish. There have been a few showings but no offers yet. Mr. Coffman asked if the lot was more valuable than the building. Dean Lewis said that was possible.

Bishop Bascom gave an update on St. Bartholomew's, Wichita, and their use of the Presbyterian church which is not being used by the Presbyterians at this time. St. Bartholomew's is still meeting there. The bishop asked Presbyterian leadership if they were going to sell the building or at least make an agreement as to St. Bartholomew's use of it for another two years.

The meeting took a recess and reconvened at 11:00 a.m.

Bishop Bascom gave an update on St. Paul's, Kansas City. The rectory restoration is complete. A major plumbing issue happened which is quite extensive and expensive to fix. Father Mafla and his family are living in a hotel while that work is happening. The Commission on Church Architecture and Allied Arts, particularly Christine Lipscomb and Steve Connelly who have been very hands on in helping make that house livable for the new priest and their family.

Appointing At-Large Lay Member to fill vacancy.

President Fitz Gibbon moved business to appointing an at-large lay member to fulfill the vacancy left by former council member Diana Waddell Gilbert's resignation. Two nominees and their biographies were offered and read by the council ahead of their

vote. Council members who had nominated candidates spoke about their nominees. President Fitz Gibbon asked for nominations from the floor. There were no nominations from the floor. Paper ballots were passed out and collected. The Rev. Helen Hoch, clerk of the council, and Canon Patrick Funston, Canon to the Ordinary, collected and counted the ballots. Mason Weber, St. Paul's, Manhattan, was elected to fulfill the vacancy of the at-large lay member.

Standing Committee Business

Dean Casey Rohleder presented a report on Ryan Bloyd-Wiseman who is a potential ordinand for priesthood.

Dean Rohleder moved to approve Ryan Bloyd-Wiseman for candidacy for ordination, which was seconded and passed unanimously.

President Fitz Gibbon, presented requests for consent to an episcopal election:

- Ms. Ryther moved that the Council of Trustees, acting as the Standing Committee of the Diocese, consent to the election of the Rev. Dr. Dorothy Sanders Wells as Bishop Diocesan in the Diocese of Mississippi. It was seconded and approved unanimously.
- Mr. Morrow moved that the Council of Trustees, acting as the Standing Committee of the Diocese, consent to the election of the Very Rev. Kara Wagner Sherer as Bishop Diocesan in the Diocese of Rochester. It was seconded and approved unanimously.

Bishop's Report (attached to these minutes)

Bishop Bascom presented her report and highlighted a few items. Bishop Bascom plans to hire someone in a half-time position to fulfill the diocesan transition missionary position as well as new duties related to Congregational Vitality. Debbie Kremers has retired from her part-time position as Transition Missioner for the diocese. Under "Culture of Invitation" the bishop continues to work with Father Daniel Mafla and his family as he gets acquainted with his congregation and works with diocesan staff. Under "Leadership Development" the bishop is involved in the search for the new BKSM dean after the announcement that Dean Don Compier will be resigning after the 2023-24 academic year. Dean Rohleder, Communications Director for BKSM, updated the council on the timeline for the search process for the new dean. The bishops from the BKSM dioceses will be gathering in May to discuss next steps. Under "Youth and Young Adult Leadership" the bishop met with her communication and youth and young adult staff about their work in those areas after sabbatical and a couple of years in those positions.

Reports from Trustees and Staff on Mission and Ministry of the Diocese

Bishop Bascom called on Mother Karen Schlabach to update the Council on summer camp who presented her report on camp data. Those reports were distributed to the

council. One of the goals is to subsidize the cost of camp. Mother Schlabach presented different options for how the diocese could subsidize these costs. Camp Wood YMCA says that they will increase the camper fees every year as well as their Y-Staff fees. The Episcopal Staff fees have remained consistent. Ms. Ryther asked about the cost of the Specialist. Her contributions are invaluable to the staff and campers. Dean Rohleder asked if this report was sharable to help explain the cost of camp. Bishop Bascom asked how the camp fees are currently subsidized. There is \$3,000 in the budget which is used for scholarships and the "Friends of Youth" fund which is also used outside of the budget. Mother Schlabach pointed out that the diocese provides ten to fifteen percent scholarship, parishes provide about thirty percent and then campers/families are providing the rest of the cost. Mother Schlabach passed around current registration numbers and staff volunteers for camp.

Canon Patrick Funston officiated Noonday Prayer celebrating Saint Joseph. The council recessed for lunch, returning at 12:55 p.m.

Priority Goals and Strategic Planning

President Fitz Gibbon began the afternoon by going over the Strategic Planning tables including notes from the last diocesan staff meeting and the February Council of Trustees retreat. The council broke up into their working groups to talk about their goals. The groups came back together and reported on their work.

There was discussion about where the plan is now and what the next steps will be.

President Fitz Gibbon presented information on possible grants that could be used for the work of the Council of Trustees. She will put together a grant packet that helps the diocese and parishes apply for grants.

The bishop offered a blessing, and the meeting was adjourned at 2:24 p.m.

The Rev. Helen Hoch
Clerk

Bishop's Report for the Council of Trustees - March 2024

Congregational Vitality

Full Saturday and Sunday Visitations

- ***St. Andrew's, Emporia***
 - Saturday Creation Trustees walk in the Flinthills at parishioner's property
 - Saturday dinner and overnight with Matt Zimmermann and Spouse Cate
 - Sunday worship
 - Time with Search Committee
 - Time with Vestry on our Goals
- ***St. Paul's, Kansas City***
 - Festive worship to welcome Mafla Family (see inclusion activities)
 - Met with parish members on Diocesan Goals
 - Met with vestry leadership on budget
- **Energized meeting of Newly populated Commission on Allied Arts and Architecture**
Members include: Christine Lipscomb (has accepted role as Chair; Deacon Don Chubb; Father Greg Doll; Mother Dawn Frankfurt; Mother Dixie Junk; Aspirant Steve Connelly

Culture of Invitation and Mission

Focus on Creation Care Evangelism

- Short interview on WIBW TV with film-maker Dave Kendall
- Story on front-page of *Topeka Capital Journal* newspaper
- Hosted 150+ people for the preview screening of "Hot Times in the Heartland" in which we are featured BHG Team led by Caroline+ did great job!

Diversity and Inclusion

- St. Paul's, KCK worship that included school-age dancers of "Folklorico" The group rehearses at the church on week-nights; many parents attended too
- Colombian Feast with more dancing after church in KCK
- Viewed and prayed with Mafla family at Rectory being restored
- Welcomed them to Bascom home for tea after Full-staff meeting
- Approved Diocesan Funds (as budgeted) from Millspaugh-Wise for construction

Met with Caroline+ and leader for area United Way

Leadership Development

Continued to engage leaders regarding next steps for Bishop Kemper School for Ministry

- Bishop Scott Barker, Nebraska
- Participated in Listening Session led by Board Chair Donna Stanford

Attended House of Bishops (one week at Camp Allen, Diocese of Texas)

- Interesting new Centering Prayer focus for leading as bishops
- Conversation about how the House of Bishops might work going forward
- Conversation about qualities for next Presiding Bishop

Exercised and stretched my own leadership as Chair of Environmental Stewardship/Creation Care Legislative Committee for General Convention

- Many conversations and a presentation for “Green Bishops” to garner consensus
- Honed GC resolution on Creation Networks to submit to General Convention
- Facilitated meeting of the bishops of Nebraska, Western Kansas, Idaho, Montana, Northwest Texas for continuing to build our own Grasslands Network

Met with Canon Lisa and Canon Patrick

- Transitions work and other parish matters w/Patrick+
- Sam Wells Gathering, Bethany Community of Mary, Martha & Lazarus w/Lisa+

Youth and Young Adult Leadership

- Met with Missioner Karen and Director Chad about their roles
 - Discussion of some realignment for next year
- In Conversation with Seminarian Sarah Shipman and a possible call and placement to ordained leadership with our youth (to be largely mentored by Karen)
- Considering an element of Young Adult mission and ministry that might be a portion of a placement for Seminarian Madison Bishop through St. Andrew’s, Derby and St. Bart’s
- Touched base with younger members at St. Andrew’s in Emporia